What is claimed is:

1. A composition comprising colloidal Fe_3O_4 particles coated with a biotin-binding protein.

2. A composition as claimed in claim 1 wherein the biotin-binding protein is avidin or streptavidin.

3. A composition as claimed in claim 2 wherein the biotin-binding protein is streptavidin.

4. A method for synthesis of a composition as claimed in claim 3, said method comprising the steps of incubating colloidal Fe_3O_4 particles with a biotin-binding protein.

5. A method as claimed in claim 4, further comprising the steps of:
   a) forming colloidal Fe_3O_4 particles by mixing aqueous $FeCl_2$ with aqueous $FeCl_3$ and adding aliquots of the mixture to an alkaline solution;
   b) adding a biotin-binding protein.

6. A method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the molar ratio of $FeCl_2$: $FeCl_3$ is between 1:1.5 and 1:2.

7. A method as claimed in claim 6, wherein the molar ratio of $FeCl_2$: $FeCl_3$ is 1:1.5.

8. A method as claimed in claim 7, wherein the aqueous $FeCl_2$ is $FeCl_2.4H_20$.

9. A method as claimed in claim 8, wherein the aqueous $FeCl_3$ is $FeCl_3.6H_2O$.

10. A method as claimed in claim 9, wherein said forming step further includes adding an ammonia solution to the mixture of $FeCl_2$ and $FeCl_3$.

11. A method as claimed in claim 10, wherein the biotin-binding protein is added in excess.

12. A method as claimed in claim 11, wherein the biotin-binding protein is streptavidin.

13. A method of immobilising a biotinylated compound comprising incubating said biotinylated compound in solution in the presence of a composition as claimed in claim 1.

14. A method as claimed in claim 13, wherein the biotinylated compound is selected from the group consisting of a nucleic acid molecule, a protein, and a peptide.

15. A method as claimed in claim 14, further comprising the step of separating the biotinylated compound and the composition from said solution.

16. A method as claimed in claim 15, wherein said separating step further comprises the step of magnetically attracting the biotinylated compound and the composition to a surface.